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ABSTRACT

This paper selects and emphasizes some of the concepts and findings to be found in the author's book, Adolescent Sexuality in a Changing Society. This paper limits itself to various aspects of premarital intercourse among adolescents, including the personality traits of virgins and non-virgins, and the effects of education upon sexual attitudes. The author concludes that the specifically social and psychological research about adolescent sexual behavior needs more attention and considerable improvement in both theory and method. In addition she thinks that two types of studies are needed: formal studies of groups and intensive clinical studies of individuals. (Author)

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Some Research & Clinical Perspectives on Adolescent Sexuality *

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Introduction

This paper grows out of my recently completed book which reviews and analyzes all available social and psychological research concerning adolescent sexuality. This book also presents an overview of some of the chief biological aspects of adolescent sexuality.

It is impossible to report fully on the results of this work. Rather, I will be selective and will emphasize some of the concepts and findings that may be of particular interest to both researchers and clinicians. Although my review covered many topics, time limitations dicate that I deal with only one of them — premarital intercourse. In respect to this topic, I will talk mainly about the 1967-1977 phase of the sexual revolution which, I think, profoundly affected young people (as well as many of the rest of us) in social, psychological, and even biological ways. While I do not think that societal factors are the primary determinants of human behavior, I think they crucially interact with physical and psychological components to shape the person's over all development, attitudes, goals, values, feelings and actions in the all-pervasive realm of her or his sexuality.

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* The book on which this paper is based, Adolescent Sexuality in a Changing Society, will be available through the U.S. Government Printing Office in the fall of 1977. It was prepared under contract # NO1-HD-52821, Center for Population Research, National Institute of Child Health & Human Development, HIH, Bethesda, Maryland. A limited number of copies will be available through Dr. Wendy Baldwin, Contract Officer for this publication.

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Some Theoretical Perspectives

Original theoretical perspectives of my book were, then, that adolescent sexuality, like all human sexuality, involves the total feminine or masculine person in the context of the society in which he or she has lived, is living, and expects to live. Adolescent sexuality, like all sexuality, involves not only biological and physical factors, but one's total sense of identity as a person, including one's sense of sexual and gender identity. Adolescent sexuality, like all sexuality, like all human behavior, is affected by the person's total development from the moment of conception, onward. It is affected by the person's level of physical, cognitive, social, moral and ego development; by the individual's interpersonal experiences within the family and those within the community. It is affected, furthermore, by the person's feelings --- a dirty word among many psychologists, especially if we are talking about positive feelings such as those of love and altruism (Campbell, 1975).

Another theoretical perspective is that sexuality has usually been conceptualized and studied by men (for example Kinsey, Pomeroy & Martin, 1948, 1953; Reiss, 1961, 1967, 1976; Simon & Gagnon, 1969, 1973; Masters & Johnson --- with most of the theory coming from Masters, 1966, 1969; Zelnik & Kantner, 1974, 1975, 1976; Sorenson, 1973; Christensen, 1970). Their generally instrumental (in all senses of the word) orientation, including their efforts to be rational and scientific, have tended to depersonalize sexuality, to view it as a matter of performance, as a technological issue that can be managed, as a time-limited act which is separate from the real business of living. Present enchantments with individual self-gratification, personal freedoms, autonomy, in essence, narcissism (Sobo, 1975) further this view of sexuality.

At the risk of sounding irrational, non-scientific, overly emotional — in short, a traditional woman — I believe that sexuality has a unique and exquisitely valuable aspect which goes far beyond the rational and managerial — helpful as these components may be. Unlike other basic physical activities such as eating, sleeping, sheltering, breathing, sex activity (aside from masturbation) necessarily involves two people in the most intimate relationship that is possible. When this is a male-female relationship it also involves the possibility of reproduction: the most fundamental of all human creative acts. In a society characterized by loneliness, depersonalization, mass production, it seems tragic if we miss the immensely restoring richness of humane sexuality between mates: fully interpersonal sexuality that involves an intimate sharing of the selves in all aspects of their humanity; fully interpersonal sexuality which requires, I believe, a sharing, caring, committed relationship — which goes far beyond the concept that any kind of sexuality is all right so long as venereal diseases are prevented or treated and unwanted pregnancies (often pregnancies unwanted by society) are prevented or interrupted. While control of venereal disease and reproduction is important, these are not the only important concerns we ought to have, or really do have, about human sexuality.

Adolescent sexuality seems to have been particularly subjected to a technological, management, and traditionally masculine orientation. Research has focussed on such subjects as: (a) premarital sexual behaviors and attitudes [1] (Reiss, 1967; Zelnik & Kantner, 1974, 1977; Jessor & Jessor, 1974; Sorenson, 1973; Cvetkovich & Grote, 1975); (b) contraceptive use and non-use (Bauman & Wilson, 1974; Finkel & Finkel, 1975; Goldsmith, Gabrielson & Gabrielson, 1972; Kantner & Zelnik, 1973; Luker, 1975; Lindeman, 1974; Miller - forthcoming); (c) abortion (Evans, Selstad & Welcher, 1976; Osofsky, Osofsky & Rajan, 1973; Steinhoff, 1973); (d) illegitimacy (Baldwin, 1976; Moore & Caldwell, 1976; Presser, 1976, Cutright, 1971; Furstenberg, 1975) and (e) early marriage (Bartz & Nye, 1970; Burchinal & Chancellor, 1963). These topics tend to be studied discretely. Even when these subjects are researched as a continuim of behaviors (Zelnik & Kantner, 1974, 1977), the investigation is largely devoid of theory, especially of theory which regards adolescents as human beings at varying stages of psychological, social and physical development; as young human beings who are involved in interpersonal relationships; as young human beings who have reached adolescence at a particularly disturbing time in the nation's, in the world's, history.

Both research and programs concerned with adolescent sexuality have a further masculine bias. Generally speaking, only the behaviors of females seem to be a matter of deep interest. This bias is rationalized with the explanation that it is the female who gets pregnant. How about the fact that it is the male who <u>makes</u> her pregnant? Although, more recently, some excellent social-psychological studies

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[1] Limitations of space do not permit a complete lisiting of references.

have looked at both male and female adolescents (Jessor & Jessor, 1974; Cvetkovich & Grote, 1975), this trend remains weak and is badly in need of strengthening . [2]

This research and program bias is unfair to both females and males. It further and unjustly places responsibility on females to decide whether or not contraceptives and abortion are used to prevent reproduction. Emphasis solely on female sexual and birth control behaviors not only undermines the male sense of responsibility in these areas — generally a frail sense, at best --- but also undermines the males sense of equal sexual partnership with females. There are numerous biological, social, and psychological reasons for males to feel more anxious than females about their sexual adequacy. By omitting both appropriate research and program attention to male sexuality, we are likely to increase their anxieties in this crucially important realm of their lives (Scales, 1977).

The central issue for adolescents is their rapid growth toward sexual maturity. Most of the public concern about them is that they are capable of becoming parents. In the past, the fundamental conflict for adolescents, especially for adolescent girls, was to control their sexual interests so that they could eventually marry a worthy man who would respect and love them as "good girls" and with whom they would establish a "nice home and happy family". Boys were to have sex only with "bad girls" and strive to become successful wage earners

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[2] Federal funding agencies are partly at fault here, in respect to programs as well as research. But too much blame should not be placed on the federal government. It is at the mercy of a "sexist" Congress which, in turn, is subject to the biases of a sexist public.

so that they could attract a "good girl" whom they would marry and with whom they would have a happy family. Today, the fundamental problem for many adolescents is that future family goals are dubious. Teenagers are immersed in a sexually confused culture; they place a high value on love and intimacy (Sorenson, 1973; Yankelovich, 1974), but do not know how to obtain it.

This is a subject rarely covered in sex education, sex counseling and family planning programs for adolescents. It is also a subject that rarely attracts researchers in this field. However, the salience of loving, intimate, stable relationships between partners to overall marital happiness, life satisfactions, sexual fulfillment and contraceptive use are variously documented by a number of studies (Converse, Campbell & Rodgers, 1976; Rainwater, 1965; Luker, 1975).

In the foregoing pages, I have briefly described some of the theoretical perspectives with which I begun my overview of research about adolescent sexuality, perspectives which broadened my investigation of both knowledge and theory far beyond the usual limits of this topic. Although it is impossible to give all the evidence here, it is worth noting that these perspectives, or, if you will, hypotheses, were supported by the research review and analysis in respect to all of the topics which were considered.

Trends in Premarital Coitus

Let us now turn to an examination of some of the findings concerning adolescent premarital coitus as revealed by a large number of studies and presented in capsule form here. Although most of these studies have numerous theoretical and methodological deficits, their findings

on a number of topics tend to be congruent.

An analysis was carried out concerning trends in premarital sexual behavior, as revealed by studies dating from the early 1920's through 1976 (see Table I). This analysis showed that the incidence of premarital intercourse among adolescent girls probably increased about 300 percent between the early 1960's and 1975. The rate for boys apparently increased about 50 percent during this period. Prior to 1967 it seems that there had been little change in the rate of premarital intercourse among young people since the 1920's. By 1973, or earlier, the incidence of premarital intercourse was about the same for young females and males - around 40 percent for both sexes by age 18.

For college youth, the incidence was about 75 percent for both sexes (Playboy, 1976). Thus, by the mid-1970's, it appears that premarital intercourse, at least among college students, had become normative for both males and females and certainly not deviant for high school seniors.

Not only was there an increase during the late 1960's in the proportion of young people having premarital coitus, but there was an increase in the proportion of young people age 15, or less, who engaged in this behavior.

So far as data are available, it appears that black adolescents, especially those of less than middle-class families, have historically been more sexually active than white adolescents, with participation rates that are at least twice as high (Kantner & Zelnik, 1972, 1977; Ladner, 1971; Rainwater, 1970; Pomeroy, Gebhard & Martin, 1958; Udry, Bauman and Morris, 1971). Although research is highly inadequate on this point, available evidence suggests the causative importance of exploitation over generations and of continuing poverty and racism.

TABLE I: FINDINGS CONCERNING RATES OF PREMARITAL INTERCOURSE FOR MALE AND FEMALE TEENAGERS (AGES 12-19)

INVESTIGATORS & DATE OF STUDIES

Kinsey, 1938-1950
Pomeroy & Martin

Non-random sample: mainly northeast & north-central urban

FEMALES: WHITE - HIGH SCHOOL AGE

PERCENTAGE By education of subject

By age	Total	0-8	9-12	College	17+
13	1	2	1	--	--
15	3	18	5	2	1
16					
17					
18					
19					
20	20	25	26	20	15

MALES: WHITE

Between ages 16 and 20 - 52.4

College bound - 10.0

Not-college bound - 75.0

Total - by age 20 - 76.7

Gebhard, Pomeroy & Martin, 1938-1955

Non-random sample, northern, urban, black women

Education: Percents

Age	8th gr.	High School	College
<15	62.0	48.0	8.0
20	82.0	82.0	49.0

No males included in study

Lake, 1966-1967

Non-random, national sample of 1500 females ages 13-20 (only 15 percent in college)

Age	Percent
15	6.0
16-17	13.0
18-19	25.0

No males included in study

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Table I (continued)

Sorensén, 1972 — Partial national sample with many unknown biases

Age	Females (Both races: white majority) Percent	Males (both races: white majority) Percent
12	3.15	9.69
13	8.50	20.00
14	14.50	30.00
15	26.00	40.00
16	35.00	49.00
17	37.00	55.00
18-19	45.00	57.00

Kantner & Zelnik 1972: study in 1971 — National probability sample of 4240 white & black females 14-19. Almost total sample reached & interviewed

Age	Black Females Total	less than Poverty	more than Poverty	All	White Females Age	less than Poverty	more than Poverty	All
15	13.8	34.1	30.2	32.2	15	12.6	10.7	10.8
16	21.2	53.9	37.2	46.4	16	18.3	17.0	17.5
17	26.6	60.0	48.7	57.0	17	22.2	22.4	21.7
18	37.1	6[illegible].4	81.2	80.8	18	26.4	36.1	35.5
19	46.1	82.4	81.2	80.8	19	38.6	41.5	40.4

Vener, Stewart and Hager, 1972
Vener & Stewart, 1974
Replication studies with large, similar populations & same instruments, 1970 & '73. Large sample non-metropolitan, Michigan area: 3 high schools in 1970; 1973, 1 in upper working class to upper middle class. Probably great majority of whites

School A - Professional-Managerial community
School B - Lower middle & upper working class community
School C - Semi-Rural, working class

	Females School A	B	C	Males School A	B	C
13 & less	7	10	7	8	24	24
14	7	10	8	7	21	23
15	12	13	13	19	26	15
16	18	23	21	21	31	31
17 & more	26	27	40	31	38	38

Rates of premarital coitus for school B: 1970 & 1973

	1970	1973	1970	1973
13 & less	10	10	24	26
14	10	17	21	32
15	13	24	26	38
16	23	31	31	38
17 & more	27	35	38	34

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Table I (continued)

Miller & Simon, 1972 Random sample: Illinois ages 14-17 College bound: 16.0 Not college bound: 39.0	Females Age — Percent 13 14 15 16 — 22.0 17	Males: White College bound: 16.0 Not college bound: 31.0 Total: 21.0

Udry, Bauman & Morris 1969-1970	Black Females			White Females		Males
Low-income area probability sample of 16 cities. Interviews for retrospective data with black & white females in birth cohorts by decades 1920-'29 - 1950-'59 and by occupational status of man who was household head when subjects were ages 10-14	By age 17	Occupational Status	Percent			no data for males
		LOW		LOW	Percent	
	Birth Cohorts	1920 - 1929	41.6		2.5	
		1930 - 1939	47.6		13.1	
		1940 - 1949	51.9		13.3	
		1950 - 1959	65.5		33.3	
		HIGH				
		1920 - 1929	34.6	HIGH	3.6	
		1930 - 1939	40.7		7.8	
		1940 - 1949	52.2		13.6	
		1950 - 1959	65.5		26.2	

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Table I (continued)

Jessor & Jessor, 1972	Females		Males	
Random sample of high school students in a Rocky Mountain, small city (52% of original sample).	Age	Percent		
	13 not available			
	14 not available			
	15+(est.)	26.0	21.0	
	16+(est.)	40.0	28.0	
	17+(est.)	55.0	33.0	
Miller, 1972	Females		Males	
	Social Class: Percents			
Junior & senior students in two San Francisco high schools, rates computed by s.e.s. (ages about 16-18)	Middle-class (mostly white)	Lower-class (races mixed)	not included in this study	
	58.0	48.0		
(Hunt, 1972)	Females		Males	
	Age	Percent	Age	Percent
(retrospective data: national probability sample, with considerable sample loss)	17	about 25.0	17	about 50.0 (college-bound)

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Table I (continued

Finkel & Finkel, 1974

Males in three high schools in large N.E. City

Females: None studied

Males

Race: Percents

Ages	White	Black	Hispanic	
12	6.0	45.9	23.3	
13	12.44	60.7	32.75	Percent for
14	23.67	74.0	49.78	all by age
15	35.67	78.7	68.68	16-17: 67.00
16-17	48.00	84.0	75.00	

Cvetkovich & Grote, 1974-'75

Non-random sample of black and white male and females, ages 16-17; 2 cities: 1 town

Percents Females		Percents Males	
White	Black	White	Black
36	63	51	92

Major Societal Trends

A review of major events in the United States in the 1960's provides striking insights about possible causes of the refueled sexual revolution. These events are too numerous to detail here, but are shown in my book. (Chilman - forthcoming).

In brief, the early 1960's saw an idealistic push for many social reforms: civil rights; academic freedom and social relevance, in education; the war against poverty; and the counter culture movement with its gospel of love, freedom, peace, sincerity, authenticity and alternate life styles. These essentially romantic movements for community, for enlightened social change surged against more somber ones: the Cuban missle crisis, the assassination of President Kennedy and our ever-deepening involvement in Vietnam.

By the mid-sixties, the civil rights movement had turned out most of its white supporters and became increasingly violent because of both internal and external pressures. Soon thereafter, the flower children began to wither under the impact of commercial exploitation, drugs, poverty and adult resentments. Rock music moved from a folksy celebration to ever-mounting angry rebellion. Investments in the war on poverty largely shifted to Vietnam. The crucial years of 1967-68 rose to a concatention of tragic, violent events: race riots in the cities, strikes on the campuses, and the assassination of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. And towards the end of 1968, Richard Nixon was elected to the Presidency.

By 1969, the "new left" had virtually been extinguished. These were the turn around years in our society. Aside from the women's movement, which became revitalized in 1967 (partly out of disillusionment with male dominated social change organizations) social reform groups, in general, gave up on the American dream of a vital national community, dedicated to the vision of liberty and justice for all, of government of, for, and by the people.

The push for outward Utopia turned inward; it turned from a sociological to a psychological age; from a drive for freedom for all, to a drive for freedom for the self; from collective protests to the primal scream; from confrontation and encounter with the establishment to confrontation and encounter in week-end retreats with other disenchanted individuals who sought the enchantments of instant intimacy or mystic meditations.

Part of this alienation from traditional authority was expressed in terms of sexuality. Hassles and hang-ups prevented the fulfillment of the human potential; they were to be abolished through authenticity, sincerity. And what is more authentic and sincere than acting out all your sexual interests, so long as it feels good ? And what is more authentic and sincere than complete equality between the sexes, especially if you are a female ? (It sometimes strikes me that only people under the age of three are totally authentic and sincere).

Nation-wide changes in youth attitudes during this period are documented by Yankelovich (1974). He found impressive shifts toward more sexual permissiveness on the part of both college and blue collar youth in his two surveys: one in 1969 and the other in 1973.

The sexual revolution, including a revolution in both sex roles and sex behaviors, which was refueled in the late 1960's, had earlier origins reaching back to the early days of the Industrial revolution. This revolution stimulated, among other things, the growth of cities, the possibilities of a broader democracy, jobs for women and youth outside the patriarchal home, the break-up of old traditions. An earlier stage of the American sexual revolution in the 1920's sparked greater sexual freedom, especially among upper and upper middle-class women. The spread of these freedoms was slowed by the depression of the 1930's, World War II and the reactive push for "normalcy" during the 1950's. Although sexual behaviors apparently did not change much during this period, there was an increasing liberalization of attitudes (Reiss, 1967).

Trends during the early 1960's revealed further liberalization in sexual attitudes. The Supreme Court, in 1960, took a more permissive stand on obscenity and there was a rapid increase in pornographic literature as well as uninhibited sexuality in the theater and in movies.

The contraceptive pill became available in about 1962. Betty Friedan published The Feminine Mystique in 1963. The relevance of marriage and the family was strongly challenged in the mid-1960's; alternate life styles, including cohabitation, communes, motherhood without marriage, gay and lesbian partnerships grew in popular acceptance. Masters & Johnson published their impressive books in 1966 and 1969 and spread the glad tidings that all women were orgasmic if properly stimulated; that, in fact, they were at least as sexy as men. Then, too, in 1966 Sherfey startled her readers by pointing out that Eve did not come from Adam's rib at all.

In fact, it was almost the other way around. The original foetal form was essentially female during the first six weeks following conception. As Money put it, "nature's basic intention is to make a female." Sherfey further cited historical and other data to support her claim that, inherently, females are far more "sexual" than males (Sherfey, 1966; Money and Tucker, 1975).

To top it all, in 1966, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, in belated recognition of the population explosion, made federal funds available to support family planning programs.

The sexual revolutions of the 1920's and 1960's were long overdue. Fundamentally, traditional American middle-class attitudes toward sexuality have not been in harmony with the conditions of the contemporary society: a society which can no longer afford large families, a society which offers numerous employment opportunities to women, a society which has developed relatively safe and simple means of contraception and abortion, a consumer society which is both intensely urban and highly mobile (Albee, 1977).[3]

Typically, revolutions become too extreme. Radical agitation is usually needed to move a sluggish society at all. By 1977 it seems that the sexual revolution may be moderating or is merely splintering into extremist groups on the right and on the left. On the right we see authoritarian, puritanical religions attracting huge numbers of followers, including young people; we see a highly effective push from the anti-abortion lobby; excited anti-gay movements; publicity given to the "total women" who advocate a return and elaboration of the feminine mystique. On the left, we see ever-more explicit pornography, including pornography involving children; advocates of incest as a way

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[3] Doubtlessly, the sexual behavior of older people became at least as sexually free as that of youth, during the 1960's and 1970's. But, for a variety of reasons, the subject has attracted little eager attention among researchers.

to enhance honest communication in the family; an apparent rise in both abortion and out-of-marriage births among teenagers; a further increase (by 1976) in premarital coitus, including casual sex and with a number of partners among adolescents and youth (Zelnik & Kantner, 1977; Playboy Magazine, 1976).

In the center (perhaps it's the center), we see a nostalgia for the relatively innocent 1950's, a slight increase in both the marriage and birth rates, a stabilization of the divorce rate (NCHS, 1977). In the White House, we have a President who is trying, among other things, to promote the stability of the two-parent family. Much is being said, for instance, about developing family impact policy analysis, of holding a White House Conference on Families (not <u>that</u> publicity gag again). On the other hand, the President is running into political realities, such as pressure from the anti-abortion lobby, the impossible objectives of providing adequate family support systems, plus a balanced federal budget, plus reduced taxes, plus aids to business and industry: all at the same time.

Unfortunately, families do not stabilize, sexual activity outside the family does not decrease simply through calls for decency and a return to old-fashioned American virtues. As I have tried to show, family disorganization and upheavals in sexual norms are deeply rooted in a vastly changed and changing society. They are symptomatic of a profound upheaval in the culture in response to enormously changed socio-economic conditions. At present we have a fractured culture, with tendencies towards both anarchy and authoritarianism. We are in desperate need of a new culture, adaptive to the times; one which

emphasizes limits as well as freedoms, responsibilities towards others as well as for the self, humanity as well as technology, community as well as individualism, giving as well as getting, rationalism as well as humanism, hopefulness as well as tough realism: in short, the golden mean which savants have eternally prescribed for the perilous tasks of the human condition.

Humans have never been able to resolve the exquisite dilemmas of sexuality, probably the most perilous task of all. We will prob ably not be able to resolve it in the present or future, either. Actually, we do not ever really solve human problems; sometimes we learn to manage them better, both through societal change and through a blending of social, psychological and biological wisdom and resources.

Specific Social and Psychological Research

The specifically social and psychological research about adolescent sexual behavior needs far more attention and considerable improvements in both theory and method. This research needs to go beyond the more usual and fairly voyeuristic approach which consists largely of counting who does what with whom. Recent studies by Jessor & Jessor (1974, 1975) and Cvetkovich & Grote (1976) constitute welcome advances in this field. Both sets of investigators have conducted sophisticated longitudinal studies of adolescent female and male populations of high school age.

Cvetkovich and Grote (1975) found that male and female non-virgins tended to take a more permissive, risk-taking attitude toward sex relations and fewer of them reported themselves as religious—a frequent finding. Sexually active females, furthermore, seemed more likely to espouse a traditional female sex role, saying they participated in intercourse because the male expected it. Unlike the non-virgins, the virgin females

were likely to associate sex relations with the intimacy and interpersonal relations involved. The authors speculate that these findings suggest that non-virgin females were lower in ego strength than the virgins.

Jessor and Jessor (1975) found that non-virgins of high school age, compared to virgins, are more apt to have attitudes similar to those of other "deviant" youngsters: those who use drugs or alcohol, have a delinquent orientation, and are involved in student radicalism.

In general (according to this study), non-virgin adolescents had significantly higher scores for independence-achievement disjunction, valuation of independence and deviance, positive attitudes toward sex, parental acceptance of deviance, and peer acceptance and modeling of deviance. They had lower grade point averages in school, lower acceptance of parental controls and lower expectations of achievement. Non-virgin boys, but not girls, had higher measures of self-esteem. On the other hand, non-virgin girls, but not boys, were more likely to place a high value on affection and to feel they received little parental support. They saw their parents and friends as being in conflict with each other. The non-virgin girls also were higher in social criticism and alienation and lower in religiosity than virgin girls.

These findings are extremely provocative, especially in terms of differences between the sexes. Although it appears that high self-esteem is associated with non-virginity for boys, this is not the case for girls. It is noteworthy that high school girls who participate in premarital coitus appear to be especially lacking in affection and support from their

parents and to seek it through an affair with a boy; this lends further credence to the speculations concerning lower ego strength of non-virgin girls as proposed by Cvetkovich and Grote as cited above. The results of the Jessor study further suggest that non-virgin high school girls are actively rebelling against social traditions, although Cvetkovich and Grote found that their non-virgin female respondents tended to be traditional, at least in terms of the female sex role. It cannot be said with confidence, however, that the studies actually obtained different results because the questions they asked about traditional attitudes were not the same.

It would be important to replicate these studies with other populations and to analyze differences in terms of both race and carefully defined socio-economic status . For instance Zelnik and Kantner (1972) found in their national survey of sex behavior among female adolescents that black females whose fathers were college graduates were half as likely as other young black women to have premarital coitus. Moreover, it appears that teenagers from unskilled working class and poverty backgrounds are particularly likely to have premarital intercourse, especially if they are rural-urban migrants (Vener, Stewart & Hager, 1972; Rubin, 1976; Kantner & Zelnik, 1972).

A number of studies show that positive attitudes toward education, higher levels of educational achievement, and clear educational goals appear to make premarital coitus less likely for both white and black adolescent females (Gebhard, Pomeroy & Martin, 1958; Udry, Bauman & Morris, 1971; Jessor & Jessor, 1975; Ladner, 1971).

Family relationships also have an important impact on the teenager's sexual behavior. For example, a number of studies show that poor parent-youth relationships and inadequate communication are more likely to be correlated with early adolescent sex experience (Jessor & Jessor, 1975; Kantner & Zelnik, 1972; Simon & Gagnon, 1972). Moreover, Jessor & Jessor (1974) found that non-virgin teenagers were more apt to have mothers who gave them little expressed affection and failed to be firm and consistent in their discipline (a finding similar to that in many studies of children and youth who have a variety of behavioral and emotional problems). For a summary of social and psychological characteristics which studies find to be significantly associated with premarital coitus among adolescents, see Table II.

A number of today's psychologists are calling for case studies of individuals as a better way of learning about the causes and consequences of human behaviors. This is partly because so many psychologists are moving out of the academy and laboratory and into clinical settings, because so many more of them are engaged in therapy, rather than merely testing. They are learning, at first hand, that people are highly complex, that most highly structured, single factor research with groups provides a myopic view of individuals. I think we need <u>both</u> kinds of studies: the formal studies of groups which can provide more objective information about people in general and the intensive clinical studies which can enrich and enliven studies of groups.

Table II: SUMMARY OF MAJOR FACTORS APPARENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH PREMARITAL INTERCOURSE AMONG ADOLESCENTS

	Males	Females
Social Situation		
Father with less than a college education	yes	yes
Low religiosity	yes	yes
Equal sex role norms	probably	yes
Permissive sex norms of the larger society	yes	yes
Racism and poverty	yes	yes
Rural-urban migration	unknown	yes
Peer group pressure	yes	not clear
Lower social class membership	yes (probably)	yes (probably)
Sexually permissive friends	yes	yes
Psychological		
Use of drugs and alcohol	yes	yes
Low self-esteem	no ?	yes ?
Desire for affection	no ?	yes ?
Low educational goals & poor education achievement	Yes	yes
Attitudes of alienation	no ?	yes ?
Deviant attitudes	yes	yes
Low religiosity	yes	yes
High social criticism	no ?	yes ?
Strained parent-child relationships	yes	yes
Going steady, being in love	yes	yes
Risk taking attitudes	yes ?	yes ?
Passivity, dependence	no ?	yes ?
Aggression, high activity	yes ?	no ?
Biological		
Age over 16	yes	yes
Early puberty	yes	no (probably)

Note: Variables followed by a question mark are supported by only one or two small studies. The other listed variables are supported by a number of investigations.

I recently conducted a small experiment with six especially trained, advanced graduate students in social work. They used a clinical guide I developed from my research review (a guide that included areas which had not been covered by the research, as well as those that had been studied). The students carried out a total of 24 intensive unstructured, clinical studies with adolescents, in respect to their sexual development. Cases ranged from young unmarried mothers or emotionally disturbed youngsters to those who were exceptionally stable and conventional from adolescents in poverty to those from upper middle-class families. To my intense astonishment, virtually all of the findings revealed by my exhaustive--and exhausting--review of research were revealed in these 24 cases.

There was the sexually promiscuous boy who did poorly in school and had a cold, authoritarian, working class father and an over indulgent mother. There was the virginal girl who, as a senior in high school, was college-bound, active in her church, a member of a warm, closely knit, traditional family. There was the 16 year old upper middle-class girl who had lost her beloved father when she was 13, turned to her boy-friend, used drugs with him, had sex relations, used no contraceptives and became pregnant, obtained an abortion so as "not to disgrace her mother." There was the 18 year old boy from a working class family who had sex relations with his girlfriend, used no contraceptives because she didn't believe in them, and married her when she got pregnant since "that's what you have to do." Then, too, there

was the 13 year old black unmarried mother who had grown up in poverty, who hated school, who kept her baby because she loved children, as did her mother with whom she lived. Finally, there was the 17 year old girl from a liberal, middle-class family who was a strong adherent of the "new morality", had sex with her steady boyfriend, and used oral contraceptives consistently. It is impossible to present, here, these cases in their rich detail, including a picture of the patterns of psycho-social development and the complexity of life experiences which played into each person's behavior. It is particularly noteworthy that these young people were touchingly grateful for the series of interviews in which they participated. They had never had a chance --- even those who were in therapy---to talk about their many feelings and experiences as young, developing males and females. No one had ever asked them questions before in a sensitive, non-judgmental way about such matters as early sexual (including sex role) experiences, masturbation, homosexuality, dating, falling in love, petting, coitus, contraception, pregnancy, abortion, relationships with parents in respect to sexuality, their own life goals and values as young women and men.

This small study was helpful in many ways. It greatly illuminated research findings; it tested the clinical guide I developed; it appeared to be beneficial to the young participants; it helped the students gain skills in an area which, for the most part, is seriously neglected in the training of human service professionals. It re-confirmed my belief, as did the more formal research analysis, that it is

essential to view adolescent sexuality in its full human context, with a deep appreciation of individual differences, with a lively awareness that sexuality touches all parts of the person's life; his or her feelings, sense of self-worth, relationships, life experiences and situations, derived values, beliefs and goals and changes in the larger society which had touched each person differently.

There are many implications from this over-view of research, from the small case vignettes I have given you in respect to; research directions for the future, needed programs and policies, and necessary human service knowledge and skills. Time constraints prevent discussing these implications. Perhaps you can imagine many of them from the various topics I have skimmed in this short paper.

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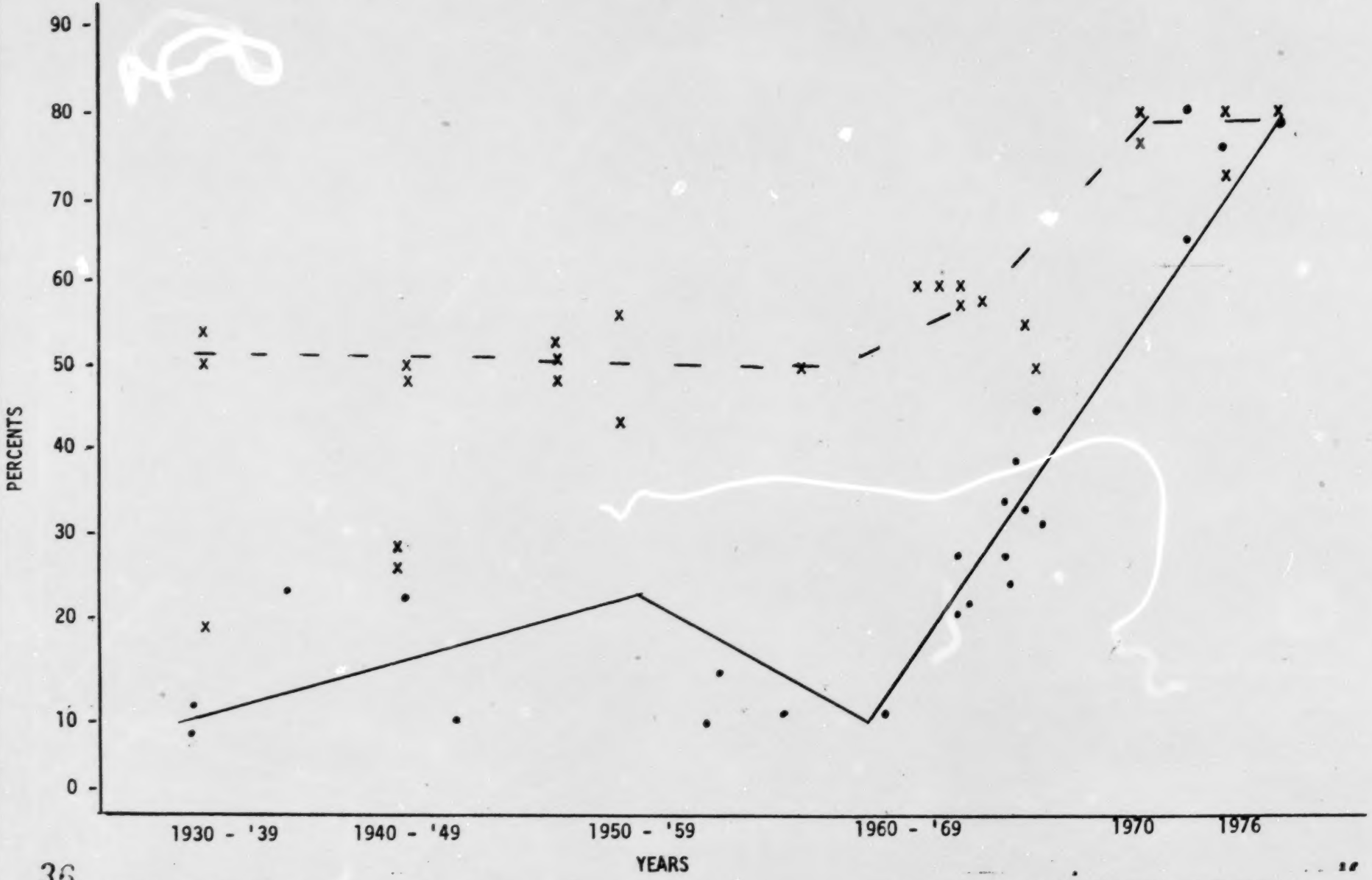
PERCENTAGES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS REPORTING PREMARITAL INTERCOURSE BY YEARS OF STUDIES



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